

through several difficult and circuitous channels, were desirous of securing a more direct and easy means of communication with those fertile regions. It was therefore with intense anxiety they awaited the promulgation of the official report of the U. States Engineers upon the subject of the proposed canal between the river Ohio and the waters of the Chesapeake bay. The facts however disclosed in that report, only served to dissipate whatever favourable anticipations had been cherished in regard to a canal communication with the west. They saw with dismay, that a canal encumbered with 400 locks, a considerable portion of which would be elevated from 1200 to more than 2000 feet above tide, and which would be sealed up with frost three or four months in the year, with only a limited and precarious supply of water in summer, must be wholly inadequate to the demands of the immense trade, it was destined to accommodate.

Abandoning, therefore, all reliance upon such an insufficient means of communication, a number of the citizens of Baltimore held a meeting on the 12th day of February, 1827, for the purpose of devising the most effectual means of improving the intercourse between that city and the western states, on which occasion various documents and statements were submitted, illustrating the efficiency of rail roads for the conveyance of articles of heavy carriage at a small expense, which being examined, and the superior advantages of this mode of transportation over turnpike roads and canals being satisfactorily shewn, the documents were referred to a committee, who subsequently reported, a mass of facts, derived principally from English authorities, of a highly interesting character, observing in conclusion, "that the stock of information now in possession of this committee is admitted not to be very extensive, but they have gleaned from several communications and reports which they have examined upon this interesting subject, enough to leave no doubt upon their minds that